



# California Postsecondary Education Commission

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## Chapman University Awarded \$901,404 Improving Teacher Quality Grant

SACRAMENTO — October 22, 2007 — Chapman University has won funding for a new professional development project to help improve teaching in kindergarten through second grade in the core content areas of science, English, and mathematics. The university was awarded a four-year grant of \$901,404 by the California Postsecondary Education Commission (CPEC) in a statewide competition. The project, titled “Science-Centered Literacy for K-2 Students: Project SMART,” will hold summer academies where teachers not only receive training, but put it into action immediately with summer school students in the Anaheim City Elementary School District. About 90 teachers will be served over the life of the project, and will form Professional Learning Community teams to take the material back to their school sites, implement it in their classrooms, and share it with colleagues. The project also incorporates Family Science Nights, a bilingual newsletter, and other strategies for engaging parents in supporting their students’ learning. The project integrates science, literacy and math standards to improve student achievement for students in kindergarten through Grade 2. It also builds on successful teacher professional development projects provided in Orange County by some of the partners in this project.

The grant is part of the federal Improving Teacher Quality Program funded under the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. It is the latest edition of a long-standing federal program aimed at improving student achievement through professional development for teachers. In the two decades that CPEC has administered the program, more than \$93 million in grants have been awarded to colleges and universities working with high-need K-12 schools throughout California. The 2007 grants all focus on supporting teachers in kindergarten through second grade in participating schools. They also require rigorous evaluation research to demonstrate how the professional development affects student achievement as well as teacher practice.

While the professional development provided by the grants is vitally needed, the research requirement is especially important, according to CPEC Executive Director Murray Haberman. He observed that “Being required to demonstrate the impact of the professional development on student achievement, not just on teacher practice, is critical and supports CPEC’s overall commitment to accountability in educational programs.”

Olivia Singh, chair of the Commission, says the grants play an important role in making sure every student has a highly qualified teacher. “The program has had a long-term impact on helping teachers strengthen their content knowledge and their understanding of effective teaching strategies—key elements of education reform,” noted Singh. “Chapman University and its partner schools should be proud of the quality of their proposal and its potential for improving teaching and learning in Orange County.”

The California Postsecondary Education Commission advises the Governor and Legislature on higher education policy and fiscal issues. Its primary focus is to ensure that the state’s educational resources are used effectively to provide Californians with postsecondary education opportunities. More information about the Commission and its work can be found on its website at [www.cpec.ca.gov](http://www.cpec.ca.gov). For more information about the state program, contact Karen Humphrey, Administrator, Improving Teacher Quality Program, at 916-445-1504 or [khumphrey@cpec.ca.gov](mailto:khumphrey@cpec.ca.gov). For information on the project described above, contact Dr. Roxanne Greitz Miller at 714-628-2628 or [rgmiller@chapman.edu](mailto:rgmiller@chapman.edu).

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